

Responses to Question Received Related to the RFP for an Equity Consultant

First set of questions received:

Question 1: When it comes to consultants, does PUC have a preference for in-state or out-of-state professionals? Our team is well-versed in Act 154.

Answer 1: The PUC does not have a preference.

Question 2: Could you provide us with PUC's definitions of diversity, equity, justice and inclusion if you have them?

Answer 2: The PUC has not adopted definitions for those terms.

Question 3: Does PUC have an employee resource group dedicated to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion and justice?

Answer 3: Yes, the PUC has a staff employee resource group dedicated to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging

Question 4: As a project-based firm, we don't charge hourly rates but we can provide line-item fees and a "not-to-exceed" pricing. Would this be acceptable for PUC?

Answer 4: The Commission would appreciate a not-to-exceed budget supported by as much detailed information as possible.

Question 5: The Commission would appreciate a not-to-exceed budget supported by as much detailed information as possible.

Answer 5: Yes, the PUC has allocated money for DEIB-related activities.

Question 6: Is PUC interested in a proposal that includes possible next steps?

Answer 6: The Commission is interested in RFP responses that provide information on all potential steps.

Second set of questions received:

Question 1: Will the PUC prioritize (over other firms) those that have worked with similar municipal clients, and would the PUC consider in their award decision a firm's previous work with similar organizations?

Answer 1: The PUC will consider work with similar clients as a factor in its consideration of proposals.

Question 2: Will the PUC prioritize (over other firms) those that are local to the state of Vermont?

Answer 2: No, the PUC will not prioritize in-state v. out-of-state firms.

Question 3: How many people are employed at the PUC?

Answer 3: 28 people.

Question 4: Can you share a budget for this work?

Answer 4: The PUC has allocated up to \$100,000 for DEIB-related activities.

Question 5: In addition to evaluating the PUC's process, procedures, and operations, is the PUC interested in an *analysis* of (and potentially the gathering of) existing employee data and employee feedback? (e.g. the equity consultant would provide data-driven recommendations for changes to PUC processes after the consultant conducts qualitative/quantitative analysis of employee data/feedback related to all parts of the employee lifecycle)

Answer 5: Yes.

Question 6: In the proposal itself, will the PUC allow the applicant to include recommended add-on components for the assessment, along with an estimate of their pricing (e.g. a set of focus groups for an additional fee) that may be beneficial to include once the work has started?

Answer 6: An applicant may include add-on components and their pricing.

Question 7: If yes to #6 above, must the additions be factored into the total proposed budget for the RFP submission? Or can they be noted in the submission but not included in the total proposed budget?

Answer 7: If the proposal includes additions above and beyond the requirements of the RFP, the proposed budget need not include those items. However, the cost of those additional items should be clearly noted in the proposal.